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Message Text

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ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02

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R 260715Z FEB 75
FM AMEMBASSY SEOUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8545
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CINCPAC

S E C R E T SEOUL 1234

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, KS
SUBJECT: PAK CHONG-KYU VIEWS CURRENT POLITICAL SCENE

BEGIN SUMMARY: FORMER PRESIDENTIAL PROTECTIVE FORCE (PPF) DIRECTOR PAK CHONG-KYU GAVE AMBASSADOR HIS VIEWS ON CURRENT POLITICAL SCENE BEFORE DEPARTING SEOUL FOR WASHINGTON AND MONTH'S VISIT BEGINNING FEBRUARY 26. DURING FEBRUARY 24 LUNCHEON, PAK SPOKE OF RECENT MEETING WITH PRESIDENT PARK IN WHICH THEY HAD DISCUSSED RECENT RELEASE OF PRISONERS, TONGA ILBO SITUATION, AND POSSIBLE CABINET CHANGES. PAK ALSO DISCUSSED HIS RECENT STAY IN WASHINGTON AND HIS PLAN TO RETURN THERE FOR MONTH LONG SEMINAR AT GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY ENDING MARCH 26. END SUMMARY.

1. PAK CHONG-KYU SPOKE IN DETAIL OF HIS MEETING WITH PRESIDENT PARK ON FEBRUARY 22, NOTING THAT PRESIDENT HAD BEEN DISTURBED BY STRONG CRITICISM VOICED BY RELEASED EMERGENCY MEASURES PRISONERS. PAK INDICATED HE HAD URGED PRESIDENT TO BE PATIENT UNTIL INITIAL EXCITEMENT OVER RELEASE HAD DIED DOWN. PAK TOLD AMBASSADOR THAT HE HIMSELF HAD PREVIOUSLY STRONGLY ADVOCATED SUCH RELEASE.
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2. REGARDING TONGA ILBO CASE, UPPERMOST PROBLEM IN PRESIDENT'S MIND IS CHARGE THAT ROKG HAD INFLUENCED ADVERTISERS TO WITHDRAW SUPPORT FROM TONGA ILBO NEWSPAPER. PAK INDICATED THAT PRESIDENT WAS CONSIDERING

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POSSIBLE INVESTIGATION OF SUCH CHARGES AS WELL AS CHARGES OF PRISONER MISTREATMENT IN ORDER TO DEFUSE BOTH ISSUES. (PAK SAID HE HAD URGED LATTER STEP).

3. WHEN ASKED ABOUT RUMORED CABINET CHANGES, PAK SAID HE HAD NOT ASKED PRESIDENT DIRECTLY, BUT HIS BEST INFORMATION WAS THAT SOME CHANGE WOULD TAKE PLACE "IN MARCH." HE INDICATED THAT PRESIDENT NEEDED "MORE POLITICAL ADVICE", CITING CURRENT EDUCATION MINISTER AS "INEPT" AND KCIA DIRECTOR AND CHIEF BLUE HOUSE SECRETARY AS GOOD BUT NOT STRONG IN POLITICS. PAK'S FORMER DEPUTY, KIM UN-YONG, CONFIDED TO AMBASSADOR THAT WHILE PAK EXPECTS PRIMIN TO BE CHANGED, KIM HIMSELF WAS NOT SURE, ATTRIBUTING PAK'S VIEW TO DETERIORATION IN RELATIONS BETWEEN PRIMIN AND PAK CHONG-KYU.

4. PAK MENTIONED SEEING SENATORS JACKSON AND CHURCH AS WELL AS TREASURY SECRETARY SIMON AND COLUMNIST JACK ANDERSON DURING HIS RECENT STAY IN WASHINGTON. BOTH SENATORS HAD COMMENTED ON KOREA'S BAD IMAGE IN HUMAN RIGHTS AREA WHICH PAK HAD DULY REPORTED TO PRESIDENT PARK. PAK ALSO MET WITH NEW YORK TIMES CORRESPONDENT RICHARD HALLORAN, TELLING AMBASSADOR HE HAD URGED RESPONSIBLE BLUE HOUSE PERSONNEL TO "DEAL WITH HIM" AND EVEN POSSIBLY SET UP PRESIDENTIAL INTERVIEW. (IN HIS FORTHCOMING VISIT TO WASHINGTON FOR ONE MONTH ENDING MARCH 26, PAK PLANS TO ATTEND CURRENT SERIES OF SEMINARS AT GEORGE WASHINGTON U. AMBASSADOR SUGGESTED HE CONTACT RALPH CLOUGH AT BROOKINGS INSTITUTE.)

5. THE AMBASSADOR SUGGESTED NEED FOR ROKG TO THINK AND PLAN STRATEGICALLY, RATHER THAN RELYING ON TACTICAL PLOYS, ABOUT CHANGE IN ITS RELATIONS WITH SOVIET UNION AND PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA, SAYING THAT BOTH NATIONS WOULD HAVE TO BE OFFERED SOMETHING ENTICING ENOUGH TO MAKE THEM WILLING TO INCUR PYONGYANG'S IRE.
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HE ALSO MENTIONED TO PAK SIMILAR NEED FOR STRATEGIC THINKING ON INTERNAL MATTERS. PAK APPEARED TO GRASP THIS CLEARLY, NOTING THAT HE WOULD PURSUE THIS MATTER IN HIS STUDIES.
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